

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I do so only for the purpose of checking to be sure that this is an amendment that has not been made out of order because of the invocation of cloture by the Senate.

Mr. BIDEN. Madam President, if I can respond to my colleague, I have been told that the amendment is germane under cloture.

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. COCHRAN. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Although it does not appear on our list at the desk, after a review, it appears to be germane.

Mr. BIDEN. Madam President, I say to my friend from Mississippi, I do not plan on speaking to it now. I was instructed to get it in line. I will be back to speak to it. It relates to permanent bases in Iraq and calls for no permanent bases in Iraq.

As the Chair says, it is germane, but I do not intend to call it up right now.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, continuing to reserve the right to object, it is my understanding this amounts to legislation and may be subject to a point of order. For that reason, authorization of basing on a permanent basis in a foreign country—it is not an appropriation of funds, as I understand it. It is strictly legislation and may very well be subject to a point of order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It is the Chair's understanding it is a limitation on the use of funds, which is not legislative.

Mr. COCHRAN. I withdraw my reservation.

Mr. BIDEN. I thank the Chair. I assume unanimous consent was granted.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator suspend for just a moment while we sort out the technical issues?

Mr. BIDEN. I apologize. I have been misinformed. I must call up, first, amendment No. 3717, and second degree that amendment with amendment No. 3855. That is my unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BIDEN. I thank my friend from Mississippi.

I yield the floor.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:
The Senator from Delaware [Mr. BIDEN] proposes an amendment numbered 3717.

The amendment is as follows:
(Purpose: To provide that none of the funds made available by title I of this Act may be made available to establish permanent military bases in Iraq or to exercise control over the oil infrastructure or oil resources of Iraq)

On page 253, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following:

PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS FOR CERTAIN PURPOSES IN IRAQ

SEC. 7032. None of the funds made available by title I of this Act may be made available

to establish permanent military bases in Iraq or to exercise control over the oil infrastructure or oil resources of Iraq.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3855 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3717
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the second-degree Biden amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:
The Senator from Delaware [Mr. BIDEN] proposes an amendment numbered 3855 to amendment No. 3717.

The amendment is as follows:
In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted, insert the following:

On page 253, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following:

PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS FOR CERTAIN PURPOSES IN IRAQ

SEC. 7032. None of the funds made available by title I of this Act may be made available to establish permanent United States military bases in Iraq, or to exercise United States control over the oil infrastructure or oil resources of Iraq.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

HOUSE ETHICS REFORM

Mr. REID. Madam President, at the beginning of this year, we found a situation in Washington that was very uncomfortable. The Chair will recall, as all members recall, the majority leader in the House of Representatives had been convicted, within a period of a year, of three ethics violations. He was under indictment. For the first time in 135 years, someone in the White House was indicted. The person in charge of contracting, Mr. Safavian, was led away literally in handcuffs as a result of his sweetheart deals with many people, including the infamous Jack Abramoff.

We had many stories written about the K Street Project: If you were a trade association or a business that wanted to hire a Democrat, you had to get clearance from the K Street leaders. It was a situation that was very uncomfortable for everyone, as it should have been.

The culmination of all of this was learning Duke Cunningham had taken more than \$2 million in bribes.

I try today to express my opposition and grave disappointment of the lobbying and ethics reform bill that the House of Representatives is expected to pass today. This is a bill pushed by the Republican leadership in the House. It is simply not much of anything. This House reform legislation is another example of the Orwellian world in which my friends in the majority live, I am sorry to say, starting with the President himself. Whatever he says, believe just the opposite.

The Clear Skies bill led to more pollution. The Healthy Forests Initiative,

clear-cutting the forests, is damaging our forests. The No Child Left Behind Act has left millions of children behind. The Budget Deficit Reduction Act increases the deficit. And now they are lobbying the Accountability and Transparency Act, which has the potential to wipe transparency out of the political process.

House Republicans have completely abandoned the idea of reforming Washington. Instead, like a wolf in sheep's clothing, they are using the cover of the word "reform" to advance blatant partisan changes to campaign finance laws, changes that will hurt Democrats and help Republican candidates in the coming elections.

Their approach to reform stands in sharp contrast to what we did on a bipartisan basis. About a month ago, Republicans joined Democrats to pass a lobbying reform bill, an ethics reform bill, the Honest Government and Open Leadership Act. It was passed by a large margin. The bill was based largely on a bill Democrats introduced the first week of the session. The legislation the Senate passed was not as good as the Democratic bill standing alone, but it was an improvement, a tremendous improvement over the status quo and imposed needed reforms so that Government serves the people, not the special interests. It was the most significant change in lobbying ethics in this country in a quarter of a century.

Unfortunately, the bipartisan commitment to reform we had in the Senate has been completely abandoned in the House. Instead of passing a substantive smart and tough bill as we did in the Senate, the House Republicans have ignored the wishes of millions of Americans, gutted all lobbying ethics reform from their legislation, and instead filled it with partisan campaign finance measures that are intended to help them in the coming election.

Essentially, they have opened the floodgates so they can pour money into Republican campaigns. The McCain-Feingold legislation that passed Congress and was signed by the President was important. It took away from campaigns corporate money, soft money. It was a reform measure that improved the political process in a significant way.

And this McCain-Feingold legislation, if the House measure is allowed to become law, will have been corrupted. It seems House Republicans do not believe they can convince the American people to send them back to Washington if they play by the rules. So like their old leader, TOM DELAY, they are seeking to change the rules in the middle of the game. They are seeking to change the rules to influence the fall election.

Here is an example. The House bill aims to disable so-called 527 groups. These are groups that operate independently and apart from the parties and bring more people into the political process. They fund get-out-the-vote activities and help register voters, among other things.